



# Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Date: March 20, 2025

Location: Flynn Pavilion, 4435 Muse Rd., Detroit, MI 48207

Meeting began at 9:01 a.m.

Present for BIPAC

Dr. Meagan Elliott

Dr. Brian Banks

Virtual:

Angela Lugo-Thomas; Highland Park

Dr. Lonnie Peek; Sherwood Forest

Absent

Michael Curis

Sommer Woods

DNR Staff Present

Tom Bissett

Amanda Treadwell

Cynthia Boggerty-Craft

Mary Kaphengst

Darlisa Terrell

Griselda Trevino

Others Present

Amy Greene, Detroit Zoological Society

Nancy Vella, BIC

Chair Elliott called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and did a roll call. A quorum was present.

Chair Elliott then called for a motion to approve the February 20, 2025 meeting minutes. Member Banks made a motion to approve, supported by member Howard. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Tom Bissett, Urban District Supervisor, gave the park updates that covered park maintenance including bike lane cleaning, restroom closures, Scott Fountain's restoration projects, staffing updates, and booth operations.

Sgt. Pete Purdy was present from DNR law enforcement and had nothing new to report. He answered questions about summer traffic and speed enforcement.

Amanda Treadwell, Urban Field Planner, presented the infrastructure updates, which included the Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory HVAC project, Scott Fountain structural repairs, zoo removals, shelter and bathroom facilities, casino repairs, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Trail, Nature's Megaphone, and the Remick Bandshell (presentation attached). She answered a question about the future of the zoo area of which the plan is for it to be made as a natural, quiet area per the desire of the public's input.

Tom Bissett brought to attention the heavy amount of litter that is left in the park, which is taxing on the environment and staff who have to clean it up. He urged everyone to get the word out to use the trash bins. Dr. Elliott said if you are interested in helping with cleanups, there are volunteer events you can sign up for. Information can be found on the Conservancy's web site.

Dr. Elliott gave the Conservancy updates, highlighting Greenfest which they will be hosting on April 12 – 13 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. that will have engaging programs for families to learn about the environment and how they can take part and what that means for Belle Isle specifically. Information can be found on the Belle Isle Nature Center's website.

They will be spending time in June and July participating in community engagement. They want to hear of big community meetings that are coming up that they can be a part of. They want to bring Belle Isle out to the neighborhoods and share and listen. She would also like to know what ideas or things people want to hear about at the Belle Isle Advisory Committee meetings.

#### Public Comment

David Carleton – Spoke about the bandshell and recent meetings with the DNR and the City regarding the boathouse.

Norma Kyle Shaw – Informed the group that the Music on Belle Isle concert series starts in June every Wednesday, with a wide variety of music.

Candice (written comment) - Thank you Mr. Carlton and everyone who is trying to bring back the bandshell and the boathouse. Really means a lot as I'm a HUGE history buff. And spoken to a few via email that I really hoped the boathouse would be reused to not only preserve the boat club history but also public accommodating. With the project on the zoo and everything else going on and with the fountain, really excited.

Amy Hubbarth – Excited to hear about the boathouse and the bandshell. Asked about the entrance to the park if there is a way to redirect the traffic, engage with the public and add safety strips.

Diane Cheklich – Commended the DNR and Conservancy on the sustainability initiatives and appreciated that they listened to the feedback on the zoo. She commented on the beaver management on the island.

Lisa DiChiera (written comment) - Congrats to Suzanne and Craig for fundraising efforts for bandshell! Preservation Detroit turnout for boathouse talk was over 100 people. Congrats to Stephen and David. Can we understand next meeting any impacts on the island/MDNR from federal funding cuts?

Member comments

Dr. Banks requested a tour of the island. Dr. Elliott said they are in the process of organizing them.

Reverend Peek suggested community engagement with the Council of Baptist Pastors of Detroit.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Next regular meeting: April 17, 2025.